

California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Santa Ana Region

March 12, 2004

ITEM: 14

SUBJECT: Addition to the SEP Project List, California State University - San Bernardino (CSUSB)

DISCUSSION:

The Regional Board may allow a discharger to satisfy some or all of the monetary assessment imposed in an administrative civil liability complaint by funding or completing one or more supplemental environmental projects (SEPs). On May 31, 2002, staff presented a list of proposed SEPs to the Board. Staff reported that this list would be subject to continuous review and amendment as other worthy projects are suggested for inclusion.

CSUSB has proposed a new SEP to support an endowment for a **Chair in Water Quality Studies**. The Chair will be dedicated to applied (not theoretical) research in regional water quality issues, serve as an objective spokesperson on water quality issues in the upper Santa Ana Region, coordinate student internships in water quality, and partner with other higher education institutions to solve regional water quality problems.

This project will contribute to the enhancement of the beneficial uses of the water of the state and provide a benefit to the public at large because the activities of the **Chair in Water Quality Studies** will lead to preventing pollution, raising public awareness on water quality issues, educating future water leaders through water quality internships, improving the surface water quality of the base flow of the Santa Ana River, and improving groundwater quality.

California State University-San Bernardino has made water resources and water quality issues an academic priority by:

- Founding the Water Resources Institute in 1999
- Hiring three new faculty in water-related curricula
- Creating two new water-emphasis degrees (Master of Public Administration in Water Resources Management and Bachelors in Environmental Hydrology)
- Providing scholarships for students in water-emphasis degree programs
- Establishing a water resources archive with extensive documents on the Santa Ana River
- Providing a GIS server to local stakeholders for sharing water quality information with other stakeholders in the region to support watershed activities
- Breaking ground on a new science building that will house state-of-the-art laboratories for faculty and student research

Supporting the Endowed Chair in Water Quality Studies as a SEP will enable California State University-San Bernardino to educate and train the next generation of scientists, managers and elected leaders who will solve future water quality issues and to focus attention and applied research on current regional water quality issues.

As a component of this SEP, the Masters in Public Administration in Water Resource Management Program or the Water Resources Institute will provide staff or graduate students under the supervision of faculty to **monitor the progress of previously funded Supplemental Environmental Projects**. In a report released in January of 2004, the Bureau of State Audits identified cases where the Regional Board has lacked the staff resources to follow up on the progress on previously funded projects. By utilizing SEP funds in this manner, the Regional Board would be able to complete outstanding progress reports while also providing valuable field experience to graduate students who will become tomorrow's water leaders. Progress reports for the CSUSB SEP will cover both the activities of the endowed Chair of Water Quality Studies and the SEP tracking work by staff or graduate students.

The State Water Resources Control Board's Water Quality Enforcement Policy describes general criteria that SEPs must satisfy. One category of appropriate SEPs specified in the Policy is public awareness projects or community environmental education projects.

RECOMMENDATION: Add the CSUSB SEP project to the Board's list of appropriate SEP projects.